Ta Green Sculp Oxon

THE ROD, A POEM.

In THREE CANTOS.

By *HENRY LAYNG*,
FELLOW OF NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD.

Ponite crudeles iras, & Flagra Magiſtri,
Fœda Miniſteria, atque Minis abſiſtite acerbis.
Ne mihi, ne quæſo, Puerum Quis Verbera cogat
Dura pati, neque enim Lacrymas, aut dulcis Alumni
Ferre queunt Muſæ Gemitus----

Vidæ Poet. Lib. V. Ver. 238.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

IT may not be improper, I preſume, leaſt the Intention of this ſmall Piece be miſunderſtood by the Well-meaning, or the Senſe wreſted by the Malevolent, to premiſe a little. I ſhall therefore deſire my candid Readers to take Notice, that I have preſented them with a Story grounded on Truth, in order to avoid the heavy charge of Ill-judgement, or Ill-nature: For had Hiſtory been ſilent with Reſpect to this extraordinary Fact (which is perhaps the only one of the Kind) who would not at once pronounce me ſtrangely injudicious, and immeaſurably rancorous for the Fiction of of ſuch an unheard of, and almoſt incredible Aſſaſſination? But I hope to get clear of ſuch a groundleſs Objection, as well on Account of the foregoing Reaſon, as what I ſhall ſubjoin; viz. that had I been neceſſitated to have feign'd a Story, it ſhould not have been, for my own ſake, ſo bloody, and tragical: But this being ready to my Hands, ſupported by the Authority of a grave Hiſtorian, and anſwering my Purpoſe, I thought it expedient to work upon.

Beſides the former Objection, there may not be wanting thoſe who may caſt another more grievous, tho' equally falſe; inſinuating that I have a farther View; namely, to teach Boys a Leſſon of Diſobedience, and enflame them to Rebellion

againſt their Maſters. But with how little Truth and Conſideration is ſuch a Suppoſition made? For Inſtance; if we aſſert that CÆSAR met with the Fate which he had deſerved, having contrary to the Laws of his Country, enſlav'd his Countrymen and Equals, and waded thro' the Blood of his Fellow-Citizens to the imperial Dignity, we endeavour indeed to deter the Ambitious and Wicked from uſurping a Power oppoſite to divine and human Inſtitutions, but by no Means ſtimulate the enterpriſing to the Aſſaſſination of a lawful Sovereign.---- Theſe Gentlemen appear to forget, or are unwilling to ſee, that I am not writing to Boys; that my Deſign is plainly to recommend with Pleaſantry and good Temper a more mild and amiable Carriage to our Preceptors; which is abſolutely neceſſary; for take a View of the Places of our Education:---- The Similitude is a diſcouraging one I confeſs, but few Readers I believe will form ſo true a Picture of the Horrors of PLUTO's Dominions from this Paſſage in Virgil, as of the more horrid Regions of a modern School;

Hinc exaudiri gemitus, vagitus et ingens,
Infantumque animæ flentes in Limine primo.

Now, as they enter'd, doleful Screams they hear,
And tender cries of Infants pierce the Ear.

PITT's VIRG. Æn. vi. Ver. 592.

Whether ſome extraordinary Dread of this hurtful Weapon may have deterr'd others from venturing to meddle with it before I won't preſume to ſay: But my Encouragement is,

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it will at leaſt be more innocent and inoffenſive in my Hands, than it has uſually been in theirs who have been the ableſt Maſters of it.

A Word or two more, and I have done.----What I have to add is, that the Satire is levell'd at no particular Perſon, but falls upon all in general, who are ridiculous enough to expoſe themſelves to the Severity of it; and that thoſe, who have been ſo wiſe as to keep out of the Reach of ſuch Cenſure by not meriting it, have no more Reaſon to be offended at the Liberty here taken, than a good Man has at him who expoſes the Folly of a Vice of which he is altogether guiltleſs. Finally, ſhould any one dreſs up a droll and fantaſtical Figure, will not all whom it in no wiſe reſembles, and who are diſpoſed to be jocular, treat it with that Laughter and Mirth which ſuch an Object naturally inſpires? But ſhould ſome Perſon be conſcious to himſelf that he beholds his long-ear'd, noiſy Repreſentative, or that his whole Dignity and Learning conſiſts in the Size and Gravity of his Beaver, I have nothing more to ſay to ſuch, than to tell them for their own Faults in the Words of Horace.

- - - - - - - - - *Demetri, teque Tigelli,*
Diſcipulorum inter jubeo plorare Cathedras.

The ARGUMENT.

THE great and good King ALFRED *having eſtabliſhed the Engliſh Conſtitution, ſends an Embaſſy to all the learned Academies of Europe to invite over the moſt eminent Philoſophers, having before erected and endowed ſeveral Public Schools for the Propagation of Learning. Amongſt theſe* SCOTUS *was the moſt renowned; to Him* Minerva *appears in the Form of* Priſcian, *the celebrated Grammarian, and diſcovers to him the Figure and Uſe of the* ROD.---- *She warns him to be diſcreet in the Exerciſe of it.---He neglects her Advice; is paſſionate, and cruel.*----ARIBERT, *a Youth of nineteen Years of Age, reſents ſuch cruel Uſage, eſpecially as it expos'd him, he conceiv'd, to his Miſtreſs's Contempt and Reſentment.----He reſolves to enter into a Conſpiracy againſt Him.*------SCOTUS *renews his Cruelty, and is aſſaſſinated.*-----

The Story is founded on true Hiſtory.------ *See* Inet's *Hiſtory of the Engliſh Church.* Pag. 288, 289.

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ARGUMENT.

THE

ROD.

CANTO I.

A Pedant's more than Pelian wrath, the ſpring
Of woes unnumber'd, heav'nly goddeſs, ſing;
Wrath undeſerv'd, and tear-compelling woes;
Too well this wretched truth each luckleſs ſchool-boy knows.

When godlike ALFRED's hand the ſcepter ſway'd,
From the bleak Lizard to the icy Tweed,
And Pict and Dane, Deſtruction's iron band,
Shrunk from his vengeful ſword, and fled the land;
While Peace, and her fair daughter Plenty, ſmile
O'er Britain, now an undivided iſle;

'Twas Time, the father of his country thought,
The ſons of rugged warriors ſhould be taught
That man, unlike the brutal race, is born
In ſocial ties, and ſhould thoſe ties adorn:
That ſo, the reas'ning nature muſt be tam'd
To gentle manners, and a life unblam'd:
That vices are the weeds of untaught minds,
And learning clears the ſight that paſſion blinds.
Swift he diſpatch'd his well-obey'd command
To bring him ſages learn'd from every land.
From every land the bearded ſages came;
But *Scotus* o'er the reſt was high in fame.
To him the King th' important charge conſign'd,
To raiſe fair knowledge in the youthful mind;
To form anew inſtruction's noble plan,
And lead unſteady childhood up to man.
Proud of his charge he loud harangu'd, and long,
On Plato's proſe divine, and Homer's ſong;

Explain'd dark Lycophron's myſterious themes,
And all the dotage of old Heſiod's dreams.
In vain the boys in wild confuſion ſtar'd,
And ſtill untaught his learned jargon heard.
Bad ſenſe ill-wrote rewarded all his pain,
And ſeas of uſeleſs ink were ſpilt in vain.
What envious ſtar, he cry'd, with baleful ray
Such evil ſheds on learning's eaſy way?
What angry dæmon ſuch deſtruction ſhow'rs
That blaſts her rip'ning fruits, and op'ning flow'rs?
As when the winds ſurcharg'd with inſects move
O'er the green field, and ſmite the waving grove;
Loſt are the lively honours of the plain,
And loſt the peaſant's ſanguine hopes of gain.
What ſhould he do?-----oppreſs'd with rage and grief,
At length he ſought his pillow's kind relief,
The oracle that oft befriends the wife
Who pray implicit, and with well-ſhut eyes.

Sound was his ſleep: when, lo, the blue-ey'd maid,
Celeſtial Wiſdom darted to his aid.
No glitt'ring javelin in her hand ſhe held,
Nor did her arm ſuſtain the beamy ſhield:
No goddeſs now!-----in plain familiar guiſe,
And form beſt pleaſing to ſcholaſtic eyes.
(For gods, we read, to any ſhape may paſs,
A ſwan, a bull, a pedant, or an aſs:)
Grave *Priſcian*'s form, and haughty air ſhe took,
Toſs'd up, grammarian-like, her noſe, and ſpoke:
Hail, great preceptor! 'twas my painful fate,
As thine, to teach Bæotians!-----wretched ſtate!
To Us the gods aſſign'd the grievous toil,
To tame the rank, improve the barren ſoil;
To ſpur the ſlow, to rein the fiery youth,
And mend the vicious heart with virtuous truth:
Make block-heads orators by dint of rules,
And turn out poets nature meant for fools.

But not Apollo's ſelf can tune the lyre
If hoarſe the ſhell, or falſe the jarring wire.
Hard taſk is this: and is the fault our own
If every ſot begets a booby ſon? *
But what from me th' all-dooming pow'rs conceal'd,
Attend, is in thy happier day reveal'd.

A tree there is, ſuch was Apollo's will;
That grows uncultur'd on the Muſes' hill,
It's type in heav'n the bleſt immortals know,
There call'd the Tree of Science, Birch below.
Theſe characters obſerv'd thy guide ſhall be,
Unerring guide to the myſterious tree.
Smooth, like it's kindred poplar, to the ſkies
The trunk aſcends, and quivering branches riſe;
By teeming ſeeds it propagates it's kind,
And with the year renew'd it caſts the rind.

* — — — Culpa docentis
Scilicet arguitur, quod lævâ in parte mamillæ
Nil ſalit Arcadico juveni. Juv. Sat. viii.

Pierc'd by the matron's hand, her bowl it fills,
Scarce yeilding to the vine's nectareous rills.
Of this ſelect full in the moon's eclipſe
Of equal ſize thrice three coeval ſlips:
Around the oſier's flexile band entwine,
And all their force in ſtricteſt union join.
Each Muſe ſhall o'er her fav'rite twig preſide,
Sacred to Phœbus let the band be tied.
With this, when ſloth and negligence provoke,
Thrice let thy vengeful arm impreſs the ſtroke.
Then ſhalt thou hear loud clamours rend the breaſt,
Attentive hear, and let the ſound be bleſt.
So when the prieſteſs at the Delphic ſhrine
Roar'd loud, the liſt'ning votary hail'd the ſign;
Her ſhrieking cries beneath the ſacred load
Confeſs'd the influence of th' inſpiring god.
Prelude benign! to this prophetic roar
If tears ſucceed, the bleſt effect is ſure:

Succeed they muſt——mark how they bubbling flow,
Urg'd by the ſmart-impelling laſh below.
'Tis thus the truant ſpirits from the brain
Are ſcourg'd up to their native home again.
Swift thro' their tubes the nervous globules riſe,
And force the uſeleſs moiſture thro' the eyes;
Condenſing there the pearly drops divide
Like vapours trickling down ſome mountain's ſide.
Eas'd of the cloud th' elaſtic ſoul ſhall find
New vigour from the day-ſpring in the mind;
Quick to fair Memory's deſerted throne
The wild ideas, ſcatter'd tribes, ſhall run;
The warm invention ſhall new beams diſplay,
Each chilling damp diſpers'd, rekindl'd every ray.
Accept the ſovereign gift——but when apply'd,
Let Prudence, heav'nly Prudence, be thy guide.
Thus ſpake the Seer——th' enraptur'd pedant glow'd
With eager joy, and reverently bow'd:

Not with more wonder ſtruck Æneas ſtood,
More pleaſing wonder, by the Stygian flood;
When from his ſight the dreary ſhades withdrew,
And all Elyſium pour'd upon his view.

Parent of ſcience, whoſe corrected page
Remains the ſtandard of each learned age;
Whoſe awful head ſubmiſſive we revere,
Grac'd † all around with many a comely ſcar;
Sooner in woods ſhall nimble dolphins play;
Unweildy boars attempt the ruffled ſea;
Sooner the due reſpect ſhall grammar find,
Nouns become verbs, and adverbs be declin'd,
Than theſe thy words ſhall vaniſh from my mind.
He ſaid------the voice ſtill murm'ring in his ear,
The ſtarch pedantic form diſſolv'd in air.

† Priſcian was a Grammarian of great note.——Speaking falſe Latin was call'd breaking Priſcian's head.

Starting he wak'd, and with new fury warm
Snatch'd at the faſces with his meagre * arm;
The viſionary twigs his graſp evade;
But his full heart retain'd the fleeting ſhade;
With ſteady care the heav'nly viſion trac'd,
'Till his high hand the birchen ſcepter grac'd,
By mortals ſtil'd a ROD.----Erect he bore
The quivering enſign of his lordly pow'r.
As a young Lion prowls along the wood,
Conſcious of ſtrength, but guiltleſs yet of blood,
With all the force of native rage inſpir'd,
With fierce example of his parent fir'd,
Tries the loud roar, and ſees, with ſparkling eye,
The trembling natives of the deſart fly;
Then pants, and reſtleſs to approve his might,
Flies where his hopes the folded flocks invite:

* See the pictures of *Duns Scotus* for the propriety of this epithet.

Thus to his ſchool the furious tyrant ſtrode,
And all impatient ſhook his ſounding Rod
With more than claſſic wrath, and thirſt of infant blood.

End of the Firſt CANTO.

CANTO II.

NOW Rage, the fierceſt of all Furies, ſhakes
Her crimſon ſcourge, and ſhoots her hiſſing ſnakes;
Forth from hell's portal's with impetuous flight
She ſprings exulting to the realms of light:
The fiend, ('twas thus of old ordain'd by fate,)
Succeeds, where Prudence quits her troubled ſtate,
As ſhe retires, advancing to command
Maintains her empire with a tyrant hand.

By SCOTUS wrapt in murky ſhades ſhe ſtood,
And breath'd freſh ardors thro' his boiling blood;
His lab'ring boſom glow'd with fierce deſire,
And his ſtern eye-balls ſhot a gloomy fire:

Alike on all his ill-tim'd paſſions break,
The gay, the dull, the obſtinate, the meek.
OFFA firſt victim fell-----He gather'd round
His duſky veſt, the twanging twigs reſound,
And the blood ſtreams from many a gaping wound.
Ill-fated Youth! a tyrant's wrath thy doom
To mourn abroad, a ſtep-dame's hate at home.
On HENGIST next the ſcarlet marks are ſeen,
The pride, and ſhame of the athletic green.
Now airy CARR, now ſullen CLOTHAIR bleeds,
Blithe WOGAN next, and fiery GUY ſucceeds.
Nor could fair SNOWDEN's * meekneſs ſave the boy,
SNOWDEN, his loving mother's only joy:
Ah! what avail'd him, now the ſage deſcant,
And well-bred lectures of a maiden aunt;

—— —— * Nec te tua plurima Pantheu,
Labentem pietas, nec Apollinis infula texit. VIR. Æn. II. V. 429.

Who comb'd,---and talk'd,---and comb'd,---with double care
Forming at once his manners and his hair:
Not all could ſave him;----all that Suſan read,
Or tuneful ſung when erſt ſhe made the bed;
Or jolly Kate, who, courted by the groom,
Still told him ſtories as ſhe ſwept the room.
§ As when a Dairy-maid with all her art,
Prepares a treat to fix her lover's heart,
The bleeding raſberries with many a vein
Of crimſon dye the curdling milk diſtain;
So look'd, me ſeems, bedropt with purple gore,
Poor SNOWDEN's milk-white bum unwhipp'd before.

§ See HOMER's Simile of MENELAUS wounded.—— Book IV. V. 141.

Ὡς δ' ὅτε τις τ' ἐλίφαντα γυνη φοινικι μιηνη
Μηονις, ἠ Καειρα, &c.
Τοιοι τοι, Μενελαε, μιανθην αἱματι μηροι
Ευφυίες, κνημαι τ', ηδε σφυρα καλ' υπενερθε.

See the other of MARS heald by PÆON.—— Book V. V. 902.

Ως δ' ὁτ', 'οπος γαλα λευκον ἐπειγομενος συνεπηξεν
Ταχυν ἰον, μαλα δ' ὠκα πιριζρεφεται κυκοωντι.

Alas! had both been there, both John and Kate,
John too had ſhar'd his weeping maſter's fate,
And Jolly Catherine had expos'd to ſight
A wide, circumf'rence of enſanguin'd white.
Nor could'ſt thou, ARIBERT, his fury 'ſcape,
Admir'd for all the ſymmetry of ſhape,
Though now the nineteenth genial ſpring had made
Upon thy downy chin a darker ſhade;
† Years, that ſhould ſet the generous ſtripling free
From each obſcene ſcholaſtic penalty.
Him fair SNODONA in her ſilvan bow'r,
Conceiv'd, bleſt offspring of Love's fondeſt hour;
A Britiſh nymph, whoſe treſſes unconfin'd,
Floated in mazy ringlets with the wind,
Fair emblems of the freedom of her mind.

* According to PLAUTUS in the Bacchides the Ancients kept the Boys longer at School.

Lyd. Nego tibi hoc annis viginti fuiſſe primis copiæ,
Digitum longe a pædagogo pedem ut efferres ædibus.

Th' enamell'd meads, with each adjoining grove,
Sacred to gentle peace, and tender love
She choſe her fair retreat, where *Iſis* laves
The ſmiling verdure with tranſparent waves;
Iſis, whoſe Free-born ſons with ardor vie
In thirſt of nobleſt arts, and love of liberty;
Iſis, whoſe generous youths with pride diſdain
The tyrant's iron laſh, and ſlavery's galling chain.
Two boys in manners diff'rent as in face
At the ninth moon evinc'd the hale embrace.
Their eldeſt hope eludes their baffl'd care,
Of ſoul impaſſion'd, and uncultur'd air.
Wild as a mountain goat, that loves to climb
The brow of Athos, rich with ſavory thyme,
From an aërial cliff's ſtupendous height,
His dizzy eye-balls ſick'ning at the ſight,
He fell, and ſunk confus'd in endleſs night.

But ARIBERT was form'd with every grace,
" Strength in his limbs, and beauty in his face."
Stronger and fairer was his mind, ſo nice
Of honour, that he ſcorn'd to ſtoop to vice;
Yet tender as the gentle babe; a look
Of mild diſpleaſure ſeem'd a ſharp rebuke:
But not the high-bred courſer on the plain
Unbroke, could more the ſervile laſh diſdain.
Who but a clumſy Pedant, to a ſenſe
So delicate, would offer violence?
But to the tyrant's wrath a ſacrifice
He falls, and high the livid tumours riſe.
Stung with the ſhame, an Ethiop's poiſon'd dart
Not with more pain had rankled in his heart.
Even Ethels charms, with every pleaſing thought,
Were in the conflict of his ſoul forgot;
The blue-ey'd nymph, whom by a fountain's ſide
The beauteous Edagh bore, a Pictiſh bride.

The manly ſports were now no more his care,
Unpoiz'd the quoit, unpitch'd the maſſy bar:
Stretch'd on the hearth his dreaming ſetters lie,
And unpurſu'd unbroken covies fly.
With folded arms a lonely glade he ſought,
The lonely glade improv'd each gloomy thought:
Reſentment boil'd within his inmoſt breaſt,
And anger mixt with ſhame his ſoul oppreſt.
Yes--- theſe are ſtripes, he cry'd,--- and tis decreed
Blood pays for blood--- he thus--- and thus ſhall bleed;
Then twice his boſom ſmote, and with a bound
Onward he ruſh'd, and furious ſpurn'd the ground:
When, lo! an unfledg'd * raven, ſtrange to tell!
Cut the dark air, and near him breathleſs fell;
Shudd'ring he ſtopt--- and in devout ſurpriſe
Dreaded the boding omen of the ſkies.

* The plan is taken from VIRGIL's Third Eclogue, verſe 64.
Malo me Galatea petit laſciva puella:
Et fugit ad ſalices, et ſe cupit ante videri.

The duſky parents ſaw their plunder'd neſt,
And their ſharp griefs in hoarſe complaints expreſt.
Muſing he paus'd awhile----when by his ſide
From high a ſecond gaſping fell, and died.
At length recover'd; theſe are Ethel's ſports,
Smiling he ſaid, 'tis here the nymph reſorts----
It muſt be ſhe--- oh! grant me, ſylvan Pow'rs,
To find my fair-one in your ſacred Bowers,
So may the azure daughters of the floods
Prefer to coral grotts your leafy woods.
High in a tufted elm's embow'ring ſhade
Laughing ſhe ſat, her * laugh the nymph betray'd.
Thus baſhful maids, experienc'd ſwains conclude,
Hide to be ſeen and fly to be purſu'd.
Now gentler paſſions ſooth'd his am'rous breaſt,
And lull'd each ſad unquiet thought to reſt.

* Nunc et latentis proditor intimo
Gratus puellæ riſus ab angulo. HOR. Lib. i. Od. 9. V. 21.

So the rude ſea by howling tempeſts toſt
Laſhes with thund'ring roar the dreary coaſt;
Th' encreaſing winds with ceaſeleſs fury rave,
And the whole ocean ſeems one gather'd wave;
But if fair Amphitrite ſhould raiſe her head,
Huſh'd are the waves, the boiſtrous winds are fled;
All is ſerene:--- ſoft Zephyrs only play
That fan their purple plumes, and curl the watry way.
Thus calm'd at once his breaſt no paſſions move,
None but the gentle joys of throbbing love.
Come, Ethel, quit, he cries, your airy height,
Can trembling boughs exclude a lover's ſight?
The Ermine thus the hunter's hopes deceives
Beneath the covert of the friendly leaves:
Thus from the wanton boy's exploring eyes
(† Each from his foe,) the panting ſquirrel flies:

† Sic agna lupum, ſic cerva leonem
Hoſtem quæque ſuum —— —— OVID. Met. Apoll. et Daph.

But Thee no hunter ſeeks with treach'rous views,
No wanton boy, 'tis Aribert purſues.
Tho' vent'rous Edagh born of Pictiſh race
Deſpis'd the cumb'rous garment's awkward grace,
And now as ALFRED's baſhful laws prevail
Our Britiſh nymphs endure the flowing veil;
Truſt not, dear maid, that lovely form too far,
To the thin ſandals, or the ſlight Cymar:
O! gently move; my throbbing boſom ſpare,
Leaſt ſome rude ſpray thy ſnowy limbs ſhould tear.
She heard, but thro' the boughs her courſe ſhe bent
Wing'd by the loves, a goddeſs in † deſcent;
Till from the utmoſt branch ſecure ſhe ſprung
To his known arms, and there tranſported hung.
So in their ſexes different charms complete
Bacchus, and blooming Ariadne meet.

† Vera inceſſu patuit Dea. VIRG.

Immortals Both; when in the mutual bliſs
Each gives, each raviſhes th' ambroſial kiſs.
With gentle force he threw her from his arms,
And gaz'd, and wonder'd, and devour'd her charms.
An azure fillet in a ſilver'd braid
Gather'd the golden treſſes o'er her head;
A ſtudded zone her purple robe compreſt,
That ſhew'd one knee, and one exerted breaſt
White as the ſwelling heaps of driven ſnow
That crown fair Rhodope's exalted brow:
While in her dimpled cheeks enthron'd above
Sat roſy Health, and conſcious-bluſhing Love.
Thus the gay Poppy lifts its glowing head
Above the ſnowy Lilly's humbler bed.

Thrice happy Age! in which no ſordid views
Allur'd the amorous ſwain his nymph to chuſe;
And the fond nymph, all baſer thoughts remov'd,
Strove to deſerve the conſtant ſwain ſhe lov'd.

Such were this beauteous pair: for Love poſſeſt
Early as dawning ſenſe each tender breaſt,
And as their Years encreas'd they learn'd to ſhare
Their mutual pleaſure, and divide their care.
With Her delighted on the green he play'd,
Fearleſs with Him ſhe beat the thorny glade.
Prepar'd alike the mountain-bull to gore,
Or from his haunts to rouze the tuſked boar,
With equal force the killing ſhaft they threw,
With equal art they bent the ſtruggling Yew:
For pale-ey'd Indolence, and female Pride
Yet had not taught the ſexes to divide:
Heroic maids to ſloth diſdain'd to yield
Atchieving glory in the martial field:
To active virtues gave the looſen'd reins,
And manly ardours glow'd in female veins.

ETHEL at length the rapt'rous ſilence broke,
And with her roſy lips perſuaſive ſpoke:

Like ſoothing Venus in the bleſt abodes,
When at her will ſhe moves th' enamour'd gods.
See Aribert, ſhe cry'd, the ſloping ſun
Chearful reviews the journey he has run,
And wak'ning breezes fan the poplar bough
That bends ſoft-whiſp'ring to the ſtream below;
The wearied ploughman leaves his wonted toil,
And cooling dews refreſh the thirſty ſoil;
The native choirs the vocal groves among
Now ſweeteſt warble their love-labour'd ſong:
Haſte, gentle youth, in pure delight to ſhare
The grateful bleſſing of the evening air,
In jocund dance with wanton ſtep to bound
To the ſhrill pipe and harp's enliv'ning ſound;
Or bathe where yon ſmooth-fleeting waters ſlide
Reflecting every flower that paints th' enamell'd ſide.
As gentle ſlumbers languid eye-lids cloſe,
And lull the wearied ſenſe to ſoft repoſe;

So ſweet her accents charm his liſt'ning ear,
Glide to his heart and raiſe new tranſports there.
In ſilent extacy he quits the wood
Leaving fair Ethel to the dimply flood;
With ſpeed unrob'd now likeſt Hermes ſeems,
Or naked * Phœbus by the Lycian ſtreams:
But ſoon, alas! behind the marks obſcene
Flagrant appear'd, and damp'd his conſcious mien;
Abaſh'd each riſing hope; each warm deſire,
And his ſunk eye-balls loſt their ſprightly fire.
So ſtruts ſupurb the peacock juſtly vain
Of his gay plumage, and his ſtarry train,
But when his ſable ſhapeleſs legs appear
His creſt he drops, and treads an humbler air.
Too late th' afflicted youth began to blame
The ill-judg'd ſports that muſt reveal his ſhame;

* Qui rore puro caſtaliæ lavit
Crines ſolutos; qui Lyciæ tenet
Dumeta —— —— Hor. Lib. iii. Od. 4. V. 61.

Sports that muſt ſtrike with pity and ſurpriſe
The baſhful maiden's half-averted eyes.
Check'd at the thought the quick-diſcarded veſt
Sullen he took, and ſlow, reluctant dreſt.
Not ſo the nymph; at once, unzon'd, ſhe flung
Her robe aſide, and from the margin ſprung.
As when the ſilver moon with trembling rays
Beneath the broken watry ſurface plays,
The ſcatter'd gleams now dance confus'dly bright,
Now ſettling in a heav'nly form unite.
'Twas thus th' Angelic ſubſtance ſeem'd to cloſe,
When thro' the waves emerging Ethel roſe.
Now with her heaving breaſt the ſtream ſhe broke
Stretch'd at her length, and ſhooting on her ſtroke.
No luſtful Satyr nigh:----the Fairy Queen
Not more ſecure upon the circled Green
Bathes in the liquid oyſter's pearly ſhell unſeen.

Forward intent ſhe ſprung:---at length her eye
Aſkance ſhe turn'd, no Aribert was nigh:
Quick to preſage, a thouſand groundleſs fears
She feels, now Rage, now Scorn her boſom tears.
Swift from the deſtin'd point her courſe ſhe bends,
Darts to the ſhore, and the ſteep bank aſcends.
Ev'n old Portumnus on his ample hand
Might wiſh to bear her lovely weight to land.
Now like the Cretan Dart, with winged ſpeed
For her caſt robe ſhe flew along the mead;
Then o'er her ſhoulders whirl'd the flutt'ring veſt,
Bound on her ſnow-white girdle, and was dreſt.
Breathing revenge ſhe flew, ſhe cry'd, 'twas Hate,
'Twas haughty Scorn, 'twas Inſolence too great
For maid of gen'rous heart,---but when ſhe found
The pale-ey'd Youth ſtretch'd ſpeechleſs on the ground,
To diff'rent paſſions chang'd her boſom beats,
Chill'd by her Fears ſhe all her Wrongs forgets;

Revenge and Fury were to pity turn'd,
And when ſhe meant to chide, ſhe only mourn'd.
She fear'd ſome Adder baſking in the ſun,
Rous'd by his luckleſs tread, the deed had done.
Speak, Aribert, ſhe ſaid, or Ethel dies;
What means that lifeleſs look? Oh turn thoſe eyes.
Mute for a while he lay, then rais'd his head,
And, deep abſorb'd in thought, regardleſs ſaid,
Yes----Brutus by the nobleſt Romans join'd
Struck on his throne the foremoſt of mankind:
Be that our plan:----Cæſar would be a King,----
And Brutus would be free:----but what a thing
Is this our Tyrant?----What a Slave am I?
Yes,---by thy hand I bleed,---the ſervile dye
Yet bluſhes on my back---Oh with what joy
The Pedant triumph'd o'er each ſuppliant Boy!
Thou, Oſric, ſhalt perform ſtern Caſca's part,
And Brutus' I;----this ſteel ſhall reach his heart.

But how to Ethel can this tale be told?
Who ſhall this ſtory big with ſhame unfold?
Oh! never, wretch, in her dear ſight appear.
Forbid it, heaven; ſhe cry'd, thy Ethel's here.
Weeping I liſten'd to the mournful tale,
So ſpare your ſhame----and may your arm prevail.
But, ſee! the Night up heav'n prepares to ſteer,
Drawn by the duſky hours, her black career;
Arm, arm, brave Youth; each daring thought improve,
And bend each Paſſion to Revenge and Love.

End of the Second CANTO.

C A N T O III.

NOW had Aurora, from her fragrant bed
Streak'd the preſaging ſkies with gloomy * red;
For thus the heav'ns hang out the ſettled plan
Of each day's toils to fate-enquiring man:
This was decreed a day of wrath, and woe:
Sweet Maids of memory, who all things know,
Who all things read enroll'd in Time's Records,
What rage could move the mighty man of words,
In Accents potent, Dialects, and Modes
Of Flow'ry Rhetoric, Language of the Gods?

* Mr. Dryden in his Life of Virgil ſays, that he hardly ever deſcribes the riſing of the Sun but by ſome circumſtance which fore-ſignifies the fortune of the day.

Declare what Madneſs had his mind poſſeſt;
(Dwells * there ſuch Fury in the Learned Breaſt!)
Say, had ſome meddling youth's irreverent hand
Ruffled at once his temper and his band?
Or had diſhonour to his Beaver ſhewn
Diſturb'd the head that wore the pompous crown?
For Cynic Pedagogue, whate'er goes wrong,
Still wreaks his vengeance on the beardleſs throng.
So when old Homer's chiefs reſentful frown,
The Grecians ſmart for factions not their own:
Deſtruction cloſe purſues where Diſcord leads,
And for the monarch's crime the hapleſs ſubject bleeds.
As when thro' dread of bleak impending froſt
The Long-neck'd Squadrons ſeek ſome milder coaſt,
At the hoarſe ſignal quitting Strymon's banks:
They form their hoſt, and join their ſcatter'd ranks:

* —— Tantæne animis cœleſtibus iræ! VIRG.

Then in harſh choir their clam'rous throats unite,
And wing thro' ſouthern ſkies their length'ning flight.
Such was the noiſe that in the ſchool was heard;
But when the monarch at the door appear'd
Huſht down at once ſubſides the murm'ring ſound,
And a dull lifeleſs ſilence ſaddens round.
Why ſhould I ſtop the Muſe in full Career
To paint his Gait, and ſelf-applauding Sneer?
" If to his ſhare ſome awkward foibles fall,
" Look on his Hat, and you'll forget 'em all;"
Form Horrizontal, that Umbrageous ſhed
A wond'rous influence o'er th' encircled head:
In * this was Knowledge, Learning, Reverence,
And Gravity that paſſes oft for Senſe.

* See HOMER's Deſcription of VENUS's Girdle.
Iliad XIV. Ver. 216

Ενθ' ἰνι μεν φιλοτης, ἰνδ' ἰμερος, ἰνδ' 'Οαριστυς,
Παςφασις, 'ητ' ἰκλεψε νοον πυκα περ φρονεοντων.

Fair Rhetoric's flow'rs, deep Logic's wiſer Saws,
And Grammar's ſage, inviolable laws;
All the harſh Greek, on which old Scholiaſts fed,
And more than Ariſtotle wrote, or read:
Such Monkiſh Latin too in jingling verſe
As Rome ne'er heard her choiceſt bards rehearſe.

With Telamonian ſtrides, and haughty air,
Thus crown'd, the Pedant flounc'd into his chair.
High in the midſt the antique fabric ſtood,
The Monarch's Throne, of venerable wood.
With uncouth characters, by Druid old,
And Hieroglyphics harſh, the Gothic mould
Was ſcribbled o'er:---- Oh! ſhould a Bard ariſe
Obſcure as Merlin, and as Nixon wiſe,
With what applauſe would he grand truths declare
In learned comments on the letter'd chair.
While ſolemn Antiquarians all agree
This Seer has read, and writes as well as We!

But now, if e'er, thou heav'n-deſcended Lyre, §
I ſwept in extacy thy trembling Wire;
If e'er I paid the tribute of a Song
Grateful to Phœbus, and the Virgin Throng;
Rehearſe whate'er the myſtic Throne contains,
It's Magic Secrets in ſurviving ſtrains.
Four figures rais'd by Necromantic Toil,
Each at an Angle, bore the awful pile.
Before ſtood Cruelty, with Crimſon dy'd,
Clenching her Scourge, beſide her Pedant Pride;
It's third ſupport was Ignorance behind;
And ill-bred Contradiction, bold, and blind.
Beneath it's elbow on the dexter ſide
The wond'ring Boy this ſtrange device eſpy'd.

§ Poſcimus, ſi quid vacui ſub umbrâ
Luſimus tecum, quod & hunc in annum
Vivat, & plures: age, dic Latinum,
Barbite, Carmen.

HOR. Lib. I. Ode xxxii.

A ſolemn * Aſs carv'd by no vulgar tool
In Alto Rilievo here taught School:
Erect he ſtalk'd along the ſounding floor,
And thro' his Pallium wav'd one leg before,
Shrewd inſtrument to point at every Fault,
Like ſlaſhing Bentley ſcolding whilſt he taught.
Here Virgil richly merited the Rod,
And Homer there can ſnore as well as nod.
With Admiration ſtruck, the liſt'ning Throng
Gather the Honey dropping from his Tongue,
And emulate the great Didactic Song.
The Moral this;----that with the undiſcerning
Mere Noiſe, and Gravity may paſs for Learning.
Or without Moral let the Fable paſs;
Nothing ſo like a Pedant as an Aſs,
If ample Beaver deck his ſhaggy Brow,
And o'er his back the ſable veſture flow.

* An Antic Device on a Gem.

Below the arm, on the ſiniſter part
A vaulted School was wrought with equal art.
Waving their Caps, the clamorous Boys applaud
In loud Huzzas the wily Taffy's fraud.
The reeking Entrails of a pamper'd gooſe
Stuff'd with it's Blood he form'd into a nooſe,
By which a knot he drew, and many a fold
His Breeches ty'd in ſlippery Volumes roll'd.
With well-feign'd tears the crafty youth implor'd
In vain the School's inexorable Lord:
His Crimes might well admit of a Reprieve,
Would ſurly Pedants any Crimes forgive: *
But dreaded long the fatal hour was come,
And to be laſh'd was hapleſs Taffy's Doom.
Perplex'd the Maſter this and that way tried
To looſe the Knot---- the Knot remain'd untied;

* Ignoſcenda quidem, ſcirent ſi ignoſcere manes.
VIRG. Georg. iv. Ver. 489.

At length enrag'd, his Pen-knife ſharp he drew,
And ſever'd, plunging deep, the mazy clue.
Loud ſhriek'd the Youth----the long-impriſon'd Gore
Guſh'd from the Wound, and dy'd the purple floor.
The well-feign'd ſcene the Pedant pale ſurvey'd,
And look'd a very Murd'rer as he fled.
Taffy loud-laughing ſees the Tyrant flown,
Shews the falſe Wound, and Entrails not his own.
The ſchool with Iös rung, and 'twas decreed
An annual Feaſt ſhould eternize the Deed.

Slow roſe the Senior, beck'ning to his ſeat
A row of twenty Youths, a Claſs compleat.
Oſric was firſt, who at his ſtern commands
Gave up his Evening Taſk with trembling hands,
Thrice twenty lines, call'd Verſes, ſhort and long;
Half Senſe, half Nonſenſe form'd the medley Song.

For doom'd to Poetry at every School
Each wretch obſerves the nice Parnaſſian Rule;
Heroic deeds in awkward raptures ſings,
And thirſts impatient for the Muſes' Springs;
Sure luckleſs Bard by each melodious Ditty
To raiſe our Laughter,----or at leaſt our Pity.
O! what ſuperior Madneſs has poſſeſt,
What wond'rous Folly the Pedantic Breaſt!
The ſelf-ſame chime to ring in all our ears
Bound 'Prentices to Sounds for ſev'n long years. *
By one falſe rule to meaſure every mind,
And to one † Standard-bed ſtretch all mankind!
Vain does the curious hand her ſkill exert,
If the coarſe Canvaſs mock the Pencil's art.

* Homer puts the following words into the mouth of his Poet.

Αυτοδιδακτος δ' ειμι· Θεος δε μοι εν φρεσιν οιμας
Παντοιας ενεφυσεν. ODYS. xxii. Ver. 347.

† One Procruſtes, a noted Robber of Attica, when he had ſurprized any Travellers, meaſur'd them by his Bed, and if he found them longer than that he cut them ſhorter, if ſhorter, he ſtretch'd them ſo much longer. See Plutarch's Life of Theſeus.

Or how can Phidian Jove majeſtic nod
Unleſs the Stone be worthy of the God?
Ne'er could Arion's hand excite a ſound
Should call obſequious Dolphins liſt'ning round,
But that the Sea-nymphs in their coral cell
Form'd to melodious ſtrains his tuneful ſhell.

Frowning, the Monarch views the faulty page,
Then vents in loud Hyperbole his rage.
O! could I lift as many hands on high
As great Ægeon when he ſtorm'd the Sky,
Who hurl'd whole Mountains at the reeling Gods,
A hundred Hands ſhaking a hundred Rods; *
Then, then alone could I diſpenſe, ſays He,
Correction worthy of my Rage, and Thee.
Stoop, Caitiff, ſtoop, the Tyrant cries, and hides
The goring Twigs deep in his bleeding Sides.

* Ægeon qualis, centum cui Bracchia dicunt,
Centenaſque Manus. VIRG. Æneid x. Ver. 565.

The Stripling writh'd his Body at the Wound,
Fell flat, and, wild with Anguiſh, bit the ground.
In the ſame Lot involv'd was Owen join'd,
And fiery Cradoe, both of Britiſh kind,
With haughty Edgar, vain of Blood that ſprings
Thro' long Canals roll'd down from Trojan Kings.
Weſt-Saxon Athelſton, and Oſric fair,
And ſwarthy Ecbert, a rich Merchant's heir,
All had one fate---with more of vulgar name,
Unworthy of the ſacred Liſts of Fame.
The truant Shipton laſt before him kneel'd,
Whoſe Grand-dame * deep in Divination ſkill'd,
In glowing Embers diſtant Fates could read,
Or when the Lamp a livid luſtre ſhed.
To guard her fav'rite Youth a belt ſhe made
With Vervain, Miſletoe, and Rue inlaid;

* Hominum divumque interpres Aſilas,
Cui pecudum fibræ, Cœli cui ſidera parent,
Et linguæ volucrum, & præſagi fulmins ictus. VIRG. Æn. 10. V. 175.

Steep'd in the droppings of a baleful Yew,
Which o'er the graves of ſtrangled infants grew;
Whoſe boughs unviſited by heav'nly light
The boding Owl, and Bat obſcene invite.
But weak the mutter'd Spell, and vain the Charm
Againſt the rage of his high-lifted arm:
Too plain, alas! his laſh'd Poſteriors told
Vain are the antic charms of Beldames old.

The Poets He diſmiſs'd,----in deep diſmay
The Poets ſlunk, a routed Troop, away:
Not dreaded more by the ethereal Throng
Orion drives the tardy Stars along.
O! when, he cry'd, will ſome aſſiſting Pow'r
Thoſe wholeſome days of diſcipline reſtore,
When the great Informator on his Throne
Deſpotic rul'd o'er Lyons', ſubject town. *

* Lugdunenſem rhetor dicturus ad Aram. Juv. Sat, i. Ver. 44.

Caligula, that Scourge of Mankind, inſtituted a School at Lyons, where inconceivable cruelties were exerciſed.

And hurl'd indignant from the Mountain's Brow
The ill-ſtarr'd Blockhead to the Gulph below,
Whilſt on the bank the ſhrieking Mother ſtood,
And ſaw her ſtruggling Child roll tumbling down the Flood?
Scholaſtic Luxury! without controul
To pour out all the Fury of the Soul!
Great days were Theſe when wond'ring Crouds ſurvey'd,
The awful Beaver nodding o'er our Head.
But now in vain Correction lifts her hand,
And Fools, and Dunces revel o'er the Land;
And Screaming Women would for Juſtice run
Should We but ſacrifice a Booby Son:
Then patient let us wait more glorious Times,
And paſs with Candour o'er half-puniſh'd Crimes.
So come, ye lively Youths, approach our ſeat,
Whoſe Minds are loaded with an Iliad's weight:
Repeat in ſacred Order every Line,
And do ſtrict Juſtice to the Bard divine.

Thou, Aribert, begin.---The high-fed horſe
Not bolder ruſhes to the promis'd Courſe.
Now loud he ſwells the nervous Dorian Sounds,
From the Arch'd Roof each broader Tone rebounds;
Apollo's Arrows clang * along the Strain,
And the hoarſe Verſe roars like the angry Main. †
Now in mild Accents breaths Iönian Notes,
Whilſt on rough Britiſh Walls ſoft Grecian Muſic floats.
But ſoon he flagg'd---Dread of the Length behind,
And full-ſwol'n Paſſion more perplex'd his Mind.
As the tir'd Pilgrim in his Midnight Dream
Meets in his fancied Path a wide-ſpread ſtream:
At firſt he ſeems with ſteady ſteps to go,
And braves the Billows, deep'ning as they flow:
At length ſcarce wading, ſlidd'ring, ſtagg'ring on,
Upheav'd the Torrent bears him dizzy down;

* Δεινη δε κλαγγη γενετ' αργυρεοιο Βιοιο.

† Βη δ' ακεων παρα θινα πολυφλοισβοιο θαλασσης. Hom. Iliad i.

'Till on the Ridge of foamy Surges toſs'd,
Tumbling, he in the op'ning Gulph is loſt.
So far'd the helpleſs Youth, while all around
Dim Vapours riſe, and Miſts his ſenſe confound.
The low'ring Pedant with an awful Nod
Doom'd him to ſtoop beneath th' uplifted Rod.
With * red right arm the threat'ning ſcourge he ſhook,
Th' entwining Birch bent round at every ſtroke:
His pitying Comrades ſaw with ſilent Woe
Wounds yet unheal'd guſh forth at every Blow.

CLOTON, do thou with better Stars proceed,
And heap, ſaid he, new Shame upon his Head.
Cloton the Dane----than him no hardier Swain
Haunts the clear Stream, and ſcours the Shrubby Plain.
Sports were his ſole delight: he oft in Mirth
Would drag the ſharp-fang'd Otter from his Earth,

* Rubente Dexterâ. HOR.

Deep in his Works intrench'd; and oft defy'd,
Seiz'd by his Creſt, the hiſſing Adder's pride;
With diſappointed Rage the Priſ'ner roll'd
His mazy length in many a riſing fold,
Darted his triple Tongue, and flam'd with ſtreaks of Gold.
None ſkill'd like him in every Hunter's art,
But the Phæbean fire ne'er warm'd his Heart.
For Dian erſt had ſworn her favourite train
Should ne'er moleſt Apollo's learned Fane:
And Phœbus vow'd he ne'er wonld tune his Lyre
To tempt one Votary of the Silvan Choir. *
Down to theſe Days the mutual Vow we trace,
Each bookiſh Student flies the jovial Chace;

* The Votaries of DIANA, and APOLLO have generally diſagreed, as we learn from the celebrated Story of ZETHUS, and AMPHION.

Nec, quum venari volet ille, poëmata panges,
Gratia ſic Fratrum Geminorum, Amphionis atque
Zethi, diſſiluit, donec ſuſpecta ſevero
Conticuit Lyra. Fraternis ceſſiſſe putatur
Moribus Amphion. —— —— ——

HOR. Epiſt. L. i. Epiſt. xviii. Ver. 40.

And ſturdy 'Squires, as Dian firſt decreed,
Indignant ſtill deſpiſe to write or read.
Such Cloton was, and who would ſpare the Boy
Who for the Chace would quit the Wars of Troy?
Down Ruſtic, Brute; the noiſy Tyrant cry'd,
Down Ruſtic, Brute; the echoing Walls reply'd.
Th' audacious Youth with well-diſſembled fear
Kneels, and with Tears prefers his humble pray'r,
Hangs on the Arm that wields th' inſatiate Rod
That drunk with Gore ſeems yet athirſt for Blood.
With ten-fold Rage relentleſs Scotus burns,
Still more provok'd, as he more ſuppliant mourns;
But now the Youth rejects his ſtern Commands,
Springs from the ground, and graſps his wither'd Hands.
That lucky Moment Oſric fierce deſcry'd,
And plung'd his Poiniard in th' unguarded Side;
Down flows the purple ſtream----the Boys around
Ruſh in----each gives, and each repeats the Wound.

He falls, he roars, as when a wounded Bull
Receives the Blow obliquely on his Skull.
Nor didſt thou, Aribert, neglect thy part,
Thine was the mortal Blade that reach'd his Heart,
Keen, and revengeful as the piercing Steel
Which ſprung from Brutus' Arm when Rome's great Tyrant fell.
Mercy---he cry'd---Talk'ſt thou of Mercy?---Yes---
Such as thou ſhew'dſt----'tis Ethel * ſends thee This---
And This----he ſaid----grimly in Death he frown'd,
Whilſt the fierce Soul ruſh'd thro' the gaping Wound.

* Pallas te hoc Vulnere, Pallas
Immolat, & pænam ſcelerato ex ſanguine ſumit.
VIRG. Æn. xii. Ver. 848.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 24. Ver. 4. for *Leaving* read Leading. Ibid. Ver. 11. for *ſupurb* r. ſuperb.
Pag. 31, Ver. 11. for *Horrizontal* r. Horizontal.